

HENDON'S GOAL BLITZ ROCKSWYCOMBE

Early mistakes prove costly

Wycombe Wanderers 2, Hendon 3

TRAILING by three goals, Wycombe Wanderers nearly snatched a point in a nail-biting finish at Loakes Park on Tuesday evening. With the end in sight Worley flashed over a cross, and Tinsley headed against the bar. Two inches lower and Wycombe would have gained an undeserved draw.

Make no mistake about it Hendon were the superior side and produced attractive and flowing football, especially in the first half.

Their fast-raiding forward line, superbly led by Harding, ripped the Wycombe defence to shreds in the first 18 minutes. A four-minute hat-trick from Wilson, left Wycombe facing a tremendous uphill battle if they were to have a share of the spoils.

In the 14th minute Hendon registered the first of their goals, as Shacklock was allowed to regain possession in the home goalmouth and slip the ball to Wilson, who made no mistake.

Two minutes later Davies substituting for Ashworth, who was injured earlier on, dribbled through from behind and fired in a shot which Maskell could only parry, and Wilson was there to snap up the rebound.

BECK'S MISTAKE

Hendon rounded off their goal-scoring blitz in the 18th minute as Beck failed to check Harding, who clipped the ball across the face of the goal and Wilson headed in.

These three goals stunned Loakes Park into near silence as the Wycombe rearguard creaked wide open. The visitors were yards faster, and always used the long ball down the middle to maximum effect. Wycombe gave their

opponents too much room in which to work, and the defence constantly back-pedalled.

In contrast, Wanderers' build-up was slow and laboured. Too often the ball was pushed back or played across the pitch instead of going forward.

Wycombe were forced to leave out Keith Samuels, and Les Merrick moved to inside-right, with Paul Bates playing his first match of the season at outside-left.

Poor Peter Roystone at right-half had a nightmare of a match. His passing was erratic, and he was continually being caught out of position. In the front line, only Worley showed any consistency but lacked support.

MERRICK NETS

Wycombe pulled a goal back after 21 minutes when Merrick forced Swannell to concede a corner. Bates flighted the ball into the goalmouth and Merrick leaped to tuck his header into the top left hand corner.

Wanderers had shown a glimmer of hope by replying quickly, but it was really asking too much to come from behind against the calibre of a team like Hendon.

If Wycombe were to stand any chance of pulling the match out of the fire, a goal in the early stages of the second half was imperative.

It did not come, although Hendon had eased their fast pace. Wycombe did not break through again until the 85th minute.

Len Worley hit over a cross and, Horseman, rising gracefully, headed home a peach of a goal from the edge of the area.

So to the closing minutes, and although the Hendon defence looked shaky as Wycombe applied the pressure, only the one chance presented itself when Tinsley agonisingly hit the wood-work.